

Project “Learning for the Future”

Sirarpi Tatoyan and Yelena Amiryan, UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Development of the Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies of NAS RA

The UNESCO Chair on ESD implements and cooperates with a number of projects, one of which is UNESCO IITE Pilot Project “Learning for the Future” (LFF), that Armenia has joined since 2012. The main purpose of the project is to promote the practical application of learners' theoretical knowledge through ICT (Information and Communication Technologies), as well as to increase the competence of ICTs among teachers. In addition to the main goals of the project, ICTs are used to address environmental issues and provide scientific information on key environmental issues and besides the “Open School Model” is also tested and involved during the trainings.

The Project LFF is an obvious example of how can extend learning opportunities through the inclusion of modern high-tech tools in the learning process. This project opens up wide horizons for students and teachers, and gives an opportunity to create bright, interesting and interactive lessons. And what is the most important- the ability to broadcast an image that provides the organization of distance learning and joint lessons with other schools.

Every year in the frame of the project “Learning for the Future” UNESCO Associated Schools of Yerevan actively participate (about 90 learners and teachers) in the successful realization of the project. The main objectives of the project are: to contribute to the practical application of theoretical knowledge of students by means of information communication technologies (ICT), to explain the scientific IC methods used to solve today's environmental challenges and to provide scientific information on key environmental issues.

The project is implemented in two stages. In the first part of the project there are organized trainings on the principals and practice of “Ecological Footprint”. The topic selection is conditioned by the fact that the concept “Ecological Footprint” includes and summarizes different ecological problems. During these trainings the basic principles and concepts of “Ecological Footprint” and acquainted with IC tools such as online tests, different computer programs, necessary to measure their own ecological footprint are discussed.

School students are active participants, not only in the learning process, but also they are directly involved in research, in the development of teaching methods, in seeking and analyzing information.

In the second part of the project, the most active participants (from 5 to 10 learners) are selected from each school to take part in the thematic trainings followed by the practical work, which are held in the Center for Ecological-Noosphere Studies NAS RA.

Unlike standard trainings, in EcoCenter after trainings all the students and teachers have an opportunity to measure and examine the amount of chemicals in the soil and drinking water. Moreover, the students get acquainted with the latest technologies used in geochemistry and computer programs for scientific calculations.

After the years of experience and effective realization of the project our suggestion is to include the “Open School Model” into the other schools of Armenia via the ICT.

UNESCO Chair Education for Sustainable Development webpage:

<https://www.cens.am/education/unesco-chair-education-for-sustainable-development>